



U.S. Immigration
and Customs
Enforcement

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News Release

Chesterfield Township retailer sentenced for selling counterfeit products

DETROIT — A Chesterfield Township retailer was sentenced here today to serve 18 months imprisonment for charges related to trafficking counterfeit goods. This announcement was made by U.S. Attorney Stephen J. Murphy, Eastern District of Michigan; and Brian M. Moskowitz, special agent-in-charge, U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE).

Marshall Cousens, 59, of Macomb, Mich., formerly doing business as MC Trading, 30494 23 Mile Rd., Chesterfield Township, was sentenced today in U.S. District Court by the Honorable Julian Abele Cook.

Cousens pleaded guilty on March 21 to trafficking or attempting to traffic in counterfeit trademarked merchandise. In particular, Cousens offered for sale over 1,500 handbags which were purportedly manufactured by such designers as Prada, Kate Spade, Coach, Louis Vuitton, Burberry and Gucci, but were, in fact, fakes bearing imitation trademarks that were virtually indistinguishable from those registered by the designers in the U.S. Patent and Trademark office. The evidence presented at the time of the plea showed that, on the date of his arrest, Cousens possessed with the intent to sell handbags and other counterfeit items with a retail value of over \$182,000, based on the discounted prices he charged for the counterfeit merchandise.

In addition to serving 18 months in prison, Cousens was also ordered to pay \$600 in special assessments and must serve two years of supervised release upon the completion of his custodial term. The Court also ordered the destruction of the seized counterfeit merchandise.

“Those who traffic in counterfeit merchandise are not only robbing businesses and their workers of their profits, they are stealing the goodwill, the reputation, and the public image that they have built through their hard work and dedication to quality. These charges underscore the seriousness with which my office and the U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement, as well as other local, state and federal law enforcement agencies, view allegations of trafficking in counterfeit merchandise,” U.S. Attorney Murphy said. “Retailers and consumers alike must recognize that the knowing sale of counterfeit merchandise is a crime which may result in the incarceration of the offenders.”

“It’s estimated that U.S. industry alone loses \$200 to \$250 billion annually in lost revenue due to counterfeiting,” said Brian M. Moskowitz, special agent-in-charge of the ICE Office of Investigations in Detroit. “That’s a major reason why we pursue counterfeiters such as Cousens. However, these investigations also help to protect the American consumer from inferior and unsafe products, and ensure that the interests of legitimate trademark holders are addressed.”

This matter was initiated by the Chesterfield Township Police Department, whose personnel executed a search warrant at MC Trading on Feb. 9, 2005 and seized the counterfeit goods. The case was then turned over to ICE special agents for further investigation and prosecution.

ICE

U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement was established in March 2003 as the largest investigative arm of the Department of Homeland Security. ICE is comprised of four integrated divisions that form a 21st century law enforcement agency with broad responsibilities for a number of key homeland security priorities.